

## Message Text

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67

ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 AF-08 ISO-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 INRE-00 USIE-00

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O R 031905Z AUG 76

FM AMEMBASSY RABAT

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 9371

INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY ALGIERS

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT UNN

AMEMBASSY BAGHDAD

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM

AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

AMEMBASSY TUNIS

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, PINT, PLO, XF

SUBJECT: ISTIQLAL NEWSPAPER INTERVIEW WITH HANI EL HASSAN,  
POLITICAL COUNSELOR OF PLO LEADER YASSER ARAFAT

REF: RABAT 4178 (NOTAL)

1. SUMMARY: IN INTERVIEW GIVEN TO ISTIQLAL NEWSPAPER  
L'OPINION AUGUST 3, HANI EL HASSAN BLAMED U.S. FOR ENGINEERING  
CURRENT CRISIS IN LEBANON. HE ALSO FORESAW US-PLO CONTACTS LEAD-  
ING TO US RECOGNITION OF PLO. FOLLOWING ARE HIGHLIGHTS OF  
THAT INTERVIEW, TEXT OF WHICH WAS TRANSMITTED BY REFTEL. END  
SUMMARY.

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2. PALESTINIAN VERSION OF U.S. M.E. POLICY. AMERICANS

WANTED TO IMPOSE THEIR OWN SETTLEMENT ON MIDDLE EAST, AND PALESTINIANS WOULD FIGHT AGAINST THIS, EL HASSAN SAID. EMERGENCE OF PALESTINIAN PERSONALITY, LED BY FATAH, HAD CREATED A REALITY THAT KISSINGER COULD NOT RETRIEVE. THUS KISSINGER, "THE ENGINEER OF NEO-COLONIALISM", ENLISTED SYRIANS IN LEBANESE SITUATION BY MAKING THEM BELIEVE HE WOULD NOT OPPOSE THE CREATION OF CONFEDERATION GROUPING SYRIA, JORDAN AND LEBANON, AT SAME TIME KEEPING TIGHT HAND OVER ISRAEL. KISSINGER SAID TO HAVE PROMISED SYRIANS A FREE HAND IN CLEANING OUT PLO IN LEBANON.

3. ACCORDING TO EL HASSAN, WHEN PALESTINIANS OPERATING FROM LEBANON HAD MANAGED TO SET OFF POPULAR UPRISINGS IN THE WEST BANK IN 1975 IT WAS NECESSARY FOR U.S. TO DIVERT PALESTINIANS BY OPENING UP LEBANESE FRONT.

4. JORDAN. AS TO JORDAN, EL HASSAN SAID KING HUSSEIN FULLY SUBSCRIBED TO U.S. PLAN AND HAD EVEN DIRECTLY PARTICIPATED IN COMBAT IN LEBANON WITH NATIONAL LIBERAL PARTY OF CAMILLE CHAMOUN. JORDAN WOULD TAKE ULTIMATE CONTROL OF WEST BANK, EL HASSAN SAID.

5. AMERICAN-PLO RELATIONS. SINCE 1967 WAR, U.S. ALWAYS PRAGMATIC, HAD COME TO RECOGNIZE POLITICAL REALITIES. EL HASSAN CLAIMED THAT U.S. HAD BEGUN TO PREPARE ITSELF TO RECOGNIZE PALESTINIANS. BUT FOR THAT, IT WAS NECESSARY FOR U.S. LEADERS TO PREPARE U.S. PUBLIC OPINION. THIS IS WHY, HE SAID, THEY TOOK EVERY OCCASION TO GET AMERICAN PEOPLE USED TO NAME OF PALESTINIANS AND PLO. IT FOR THAT REASON ALSO THAT THEY STRESSED ROLE PLAYED BY PALESTINIANS IN EVACUATION OF AMERICAN NATIONALS FROM LEBANON. IT ALSO IS IN THIS SENSE THAT FORD'S HANDSHAKE IN BUCHAREST (WITH REPRESENTATIVE OF THE PLO) SHOULD BE VIEWED. ON THE OTHER HAND, EL HASSAN STATED, U.S. WAS TRYING TO WIPE OUT PALESTINIAN MILITARY FORCE. AMERICAN POLICY THUS "TWO-FACED" SINCE IT SPOKE OF RECOGNITION OF THE PLO, GAVE THANKS FOR THE AID GIVEN IN EVACUATION OF AMERICANS FROM LEBANON, BUT WORKED AT THE SAME TIME FOR CREATION OF MILITARY FORCE OPPOSED TO THE PALESTINIANS. FOR PALESTINIANS, IMPORTANT THING LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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WAS NOT U.S. RECOGNITION BUT REALIZATION OF THEIR OBJECTIVE. IF "MINIMUM THRESHOLD" OF A NATIONALIST SOLUTION NOT ATTAINED, ACCORDING TO EL HASSAN, PALESTINIANS WOULD PREFER TO TAKE UP CROSS AGAIN.

6. MOROCCO-PLO RELATIONS. EL HASSAN THANKED MOROCCO FOR ITS EXTERNAL AND INTERNAL SUPPORT WHICH CONSISTED OF MATERIEL, AS WELL AS MILITARY AND DIPLOMATIC,

ASSISTANCE. "WE WERE FORBIDDEN TO SPEAK OF THIS HELP, IN ACCORDANCE WITH DESIRES OF HIS MAJESTY HIMSELF," EL HASSAN SAID. EL HASSAN TERMED MOROCCAN-PALESTINIAN RELATIONS "FRATERNAL."

7. MEANWHILE, SEMI-OFFICIAL AL ANBAA CARRIED EDITORIAL ON SUBJECT "RAPPROCHEMENT" BETWEEN U.S. AND PLO, CITING U.S.-PLO CONTACTS IN BEIRUT IN RECENT DAYS. THIS CONTACT, PAPER STATED, AMOUNTED TO "FORM OF RECOGNITION OF PLO," ALTHOUGH U.S. MUST TAKE CARE LEST IT UPSET ISRAEL IN AN ELECTION YEAR.

8. COMMENT: WE ARE NOT IN POSITION TO JUDGE SIGNIFICANCE, IF ANY, OF EL HASSAN'S COMMENTS. HOWEVER, MATERIAL THIS CRITICAL OF US M.E. POLICY SELDOM APPEARS IN LOCAL PRESS, EVEN IN ISTIQLAL PRESS, WHICH IS MOST ADAMANT PRO-PALESTINIAN SPOKESMAN HERE. IT IS INTERESTING THAT THEME OF U.S.-PLO "RAPPROCHEMENT" APPEARED IN LOCAL PRESS TWICE IN THE SAME DAY, SHOWING THAT IDEA HAS ALLURE BOTH IN SOME OFFICIAL AND PRIVATE ARAB CIRCLES.  
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## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptioning:** X  
**Capture Date:** 01 JAN 1994  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** FOREIGN RELATIONS, PRESS CONFERENCES, FOREIGN POLICY POSITION  
**Control Number:** n/a  
**Copy:** SINGLE  
**Draft Date:** 03 AUG 1976  
**Decaption Date:** 01 JAN 1960  
**Decaption Note:**  
**Disposition Action:** RELEASED  
**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Authority:** izenbei0  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 28 MAY 2004  
**Disposition Event:**  
**Disposition History:** n/a  
**Disposition Reason:**  
**Disposition Remarks:**  
**Document Number:** 1976RABAT04197  
**Document Source:** CORE  
**Document Unique ID:** 00  
**Drafter:** n/a  
**Enclosure:** n/a  
**Executive Order:** N/A  
**Errors:** N/A  
**Film Number:** D760299-0358  
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**Image Path:**  
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**Office:** ACTION NEA  
**Original Classification:** LIMITED OFFICIAL USE  
**Original Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Original Previous Classification:** n/a  
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**Page Count:** 3  
**Previous Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Previous Classification:** LIMITED OFFICIAL USE  
**Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Reference:** 76 RABAT 4178  
**Review Action:** RELEASED, APPROVED  
**Review Authority:** izenbei0  
**Review Comment:** n/a  
**Review Content Flags:**  
**Review Date:** 05 MAY 2004  
**Review Event:**  
**Review Exemptions:** n/a  
**Review History:** RELEASED <05 MAY 2004 by woolflhd>; APPROVED <31 AUG 2004 by izenbei0>  
**Review Markings:**

Margaret P. Grafeld  
Declassified/Released  
US Department of State  
EO Systematic Review  
04 MAY 2006

**Review Media Identifier:**  
**Review Referrals:** n/a  
**Review Release Date:** n/a  
**Review Release Event:** n/a  
**Review Transfer Date:**  
**Review Withdrawn Fields:** n/a  
**Secure:** OPEN  
**Status:** NATIVE  
**Subject:** ISTIQLAL NEWSPAPER INTERVIEW WITH HANI EL HASSAN, POLITICAL COUNSELOR OF PLO LEADER YASSER ARAFAT  
**TAGS:** PFOR, PINT, XF, US, PLO  
**To:** STATE  
**Type:** TE  
**Markings:** Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006